

June 10, 2003

TO: NITC Commissioners

FROM: Rick Becker

SUBJECT: **Survey Options**

OPTION 1: WEB-BASED, UNSCIENTIFIC SURVEY

Option 1 is to develop one or more survey documents which are Web-based and linked to the State Portal (www.Nebraska.gov).

PROS

- Cost. Other than staff time to develop the survey, there would be no cost for this option. Nebrask@ Online would be able to create a Web-based survey, provide links to the State's Portal, and collect the results.
- Flexibility. A single survey instrument could seek general input, or multiple, sector-based surveys could be posted (e.g. a "citizen" survey and a "business" survey). The number of questions would not affect the cost. The type of responses sought is flexible, including open-ended and multiple-choice questions.
- Time. The survey could be posted at anytime, for any length of time desired.

CONS

- Unscientific. The survey would not provide scientifically reliable results. The survey would only reflect the opinions of those who chose to participate. The results could not be assumed to represent the opinions of Internet users in general, nor the public as a whole.

OPTION 2: SCIENTIFIC SURVEY

Staff contacted the Center for Applied Rural Innovation at the University of Nebraska to get a cost estimate for a scientific mail survey using the standard four mailing methodology. This method, which includes sending a preletter, the survey, a reminder postcard, and a follow-up survey, is widely recognized as the best method of ensuring a high rate of response. The cost of conducting a statewide survey with a sample of 4,410 would be \$19,237. This would allow for the analysis of regional responses. Costs could be reduced by eliminating the preletter or the follow-up survey. It may also be possible to reduce costs by including the Web address for an online survey and asking recipients to fill the survey out online or to contact the Center for Applied Rural Innovation at the University of Nebraska for a paper copy. The response rate would probably drop by incorporating any of these cost-saving methods.

PROS

- This method will produce the most valid and reliable results.

- Professor John C. Allen, the Director of the Center for Applied Rural Innovation is recognized as an expert in survey methodology. Rebecca Vogt, the Rural Poll Manager, has extensive experience developing and managing surveys.

CONS

- This method is more expensive and time consuming.

OPTION 3: NATIONAL SURVEYS

Several e-government reports exist which include data based on nationwide surveys. These reports include information on how citizens and businesses use e-government, and the types of services users would like to see made available over the Internet. The State Government Council used the results of some of these surveys when developing the *E-Government Strategic Plan for Nebraska State Government*.

The following is a list of some of the reports we currently have:

The New E-Government Equation: Ease, Engagement, Privacy and Protection, Hart-Teeter for the Council for Excellence in Government, <http://www.excelgov.org/>, April 2003

Horrigan, J., *Counting on the Internet*, Pew Internet & American Life Project, <http://www.pewinternet.org/>, December 29, 2002

Larsen, E., *The rise of the e-citizen*, Pew Internet & American Life Project, <http://www.pewinternet.org/>, April 3, 2002

Benchmarking the eGovernment Revolution, Momentum Research Group of Cunningham Communications (Commissioned by NIC), July 26, 2000

PROS

- No cost.
- Scientific results from nationwide survey can be used in conjunction with an unscientific, Web-based survey of Nebraskans.

CONS

- National survey results may, or may not, reflect the interests and needs of our customers.